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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

April 29, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell:

I write to urge you to take all necessary steps to institute uniform and comprehensive worker protections in the Senate buildings and Capitol Complex before the Senate returns to session next week. These standards must be developed by the Sergeant at Arms and the Attending Physician with the input of public health experts to ensure their effectiveness and must apply to all workers, including contract employees, in all departments, including the Capitol Police, cafeteria workers, technical and help desk staff, the Radio and TV Gallery workers, stenographers, and custodial staff. Failure to protect all workers in Senate offices and operations could lead to exposure to or spread of the coronavirus. We must do our part to protect workers' safety and public health during the pandemic.

At a minimum, I urge you to put in place the following mandatory standards across all Senate operations. First, all senators and Senate employees must be provided proper personal protective equipment and required to wear it when in Senate buildings or on the Capitol Complex. In addition, the Senate must comply with social distancing guidelines. Employees should perform their duties six feet apart from others. In areas of the Senate buildings and Capitol Complex visited by high volumes of individuals, measures must be taken to limit the size of these groups and to ensure individuals waiting in lines are kept the proper distance from each other. When employees cannot maintain six feet of distance, such as at cash registers, the Post Office, Printing and Graphics, and the disbursing office, proper protective shields must be installed to limit virus transmission. In addition, hand sanitizer and hand washing stations must be placed throughout the Senate complex and as close to employee work stations as possible to provide the opportunity for frequent hand washing. The sharing of tools or equipment puts workers at greater risk and should be prohibited unless such equipment is adequately cleaned after any individual uses it. Furthermore, the Senate must adopt strict cleaning procedures and regularly disinfect all Senate buildings and the Capitol Complex. All custodial staff must be provided protective equipment that protects them not just from the spread of the virus but also the cleaning chemicals, and they must be given proper time and equipment necessary to complete the cleanings.

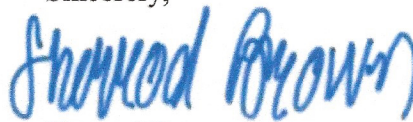
The Washington, D.C. area continues to see an increase in coronavirus infections, and we must take every action necessary to limit the spread of the virus. Senate employees should be informed when they have been exposed or are at risk of having been exposed to the virus at work and should be permitted to take whatever measures deemed appropriate to protect the health of themselves, their families, and their coworkers. No employee should be required to show up to

work during the public health emergency or face retaliation for protecting their own health or alerting supervisors to insufficient safety protocols. Moreover, all employees should have access to paid leave at their full salary. If a person infected with the coronavirus enters the Senate buildings or the Capitol Complex, the Senate must immediately undertake a full cleaning and disinfecting of the workplace to prevent further spread of the virus.

Nearly a million Americans have been infected with the coronavirus, and more than 50,000 have lost their lives as a result. Congress must play a critical role in providing the resources to health care providers, workers, states, municipalities, schools, and other entities to help them respond to the virus and its impacts. It is imperative the Senate remain part of the solution, not part of the problem as the country continues to respond to the public health emergency. The Senate should not return to legislative business without taking all necessary steps to ensure all Senate and Capitol Complex workers have the protections they need to stay safe on the job. I ask you to respond to this letter by May 1 identifying all the ways in which the worker protections outlined above will be implemented.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I look forward to working with you to keep Members of Congress and all Senate employees safe.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

Cc: Leader Schumer, the Sergeant At Arms, the Architect of the Capitol, the Office of the Attending Physician, the United States Capitol Police, the Secretary of the Senate, the Senate Chief Information Officer, the Senate Rules Committee